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Guiding Principles



Mission statement:

The Iboga Therapy House is dedicated to supporting people who are dealing with the unique and ever changing issues that surround chemical dependence.

Working from the perspectives of **Health Promotion** and **Harm Reduction**, we are working towards generating credible, evidence-based data that supports the service of a holistic residential detoxification program that utilizes the benefits of the naturally occurring plant alkaloid Ibogaine.

Our program model is based on a public health approach (as outlined in the British Columbia **Planning Framework for Action on Substance Use and Addiction**), it recognizes the complex set of issues that those dealing with addiction face. It focuses on positive attributes, builds on strengths and avoids deficit thinking. It includes key concepts such as health promotion, harm reduction, community building, and social well-being. It identifies key factors in healthy lifestyles such as nutrition, exercise, sexual health, housing, social support, employment, education, counseling and access to services.

The holistic model accepts and works with individual differences in client characteristics in both preventing and responding to potential problems. These include unique risks associated with gender, age, and cultural identity. It fosters knowledge, skills, attitudinal changes, supports engagement in safer and healthier lifestyles, and seeks to create conditions that make the healthy choice the easy choice.

Goals of our Project:

To reduce the potential harms associated with long-term substance use and abuse by providing Ibogaine-assisted detoxification and therapy in an effort to help drug consumers reach their goals in recovery.

To offer support to those seeking recovery from chemical dependence within a holistic, health promotion and harm reduction-based therapy modality.

To provide an alternative pharmacotherapy that is not a replacement or substitution therapy.

To provide incentive towards further initiatives that support and evaluate the development of Ibogaine-assisted detoxification and therapy.

To provide access to information about Ibogaine and other alternative recovery options.

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and/or spiritual exploration and healing purposes.

To provide a model for Ibogaine therapy in Canada that is grounded in evidence-based practices.

To support the research, development and regulation of Ibogaine as a Natural Health Product in Canada to be used within a specific therapeutic framework.

Health Promotion:

Health promotion recognizes the importance of increasing individual and community control over factors that affect health. It fosters knowledge, skills, attitudinal changes and supports needed to help people engage in safer and healthier lifestyles, and seeks to create conditions that make the healthy choice the easy choice. Health promotion emphasizes societal change and supports an active role for the public in setting priorities, making decisions, planning strategies and implementation. Health promotion involves five inter-related actions: building healthy public policy, creating supportive environments, strengthening community action, developing personal health and coping skills, and re-orienting health services beyond an exclusive focus on treatment.

Harm Reduction:

Harm reduction is secondary or tertiary prevention that seeks to lessen the harms associated with substance use without requiring abstinence. It rests on the assumption that there is a broad spectrum of substance use in our culture, some of which is beneficial or non-problematic. Harm reduction seeks practical solutions to the harms of problematic substance use. This includes providing information and education on substance use and helping people who use substances to address important health concerns such as housing, nutrition or hygiene. Harm reduction acknowledges the ethical imperative of helping keep people as safe and healthy as possible, while respecting autonomy and supporting informed decision-making in the context of active substance use.

-From **EVERY DOOR IS THE RIGHT DOOR: A British Columbia Planning Framework to Address Problematic Substance Use and Addiction 2004**

Principles of Harm Reduction

Harm reduction is a set of practical strategies that reduce negative consequences of drug use, incorporating a spectrum of strategies from safer use, to managed use to abstinence. Harm reduction strategies meet drug users "where they're at," addressing conditions of use along with the use itself.

Because harm reduction demands that interventions and policies designed to serve drug users reflect specific individual and community needs, there is no universal definition of or formula for implementing harm reduction. However, HRC considers the following principles central to harm reduction practice.

* Accepts, for better and for worse, that licit and illicit drug use is part of our world and chooses to work to minimize its harmful effects rather than simply ignore or condemn them.

* Understands drug use as a complex, multi-faceted phenomenon that encompasses a continuum of behaviors from severe abuse to total abstinence, and acknowledges that some ways of using drugs are clearly safer than others. * Establishes quality of individual and community life and well being--not necessarily cessation of all drug use--as the criteria for successful interventions and policies.

- * Calls for the non-judgmental, non-coercive provision of services and resources to people who use drugs and the communities in which they live in order to assist them in reducing attendant harm.

- * Ensures that drug users and those with a history of drug use routinely have a real voice in the creation of programs and policies designed to serve them.

- * Affirms drugs users themselves as the primary agents of reducing the harms of their drug use, and seeks to empower users to share information and support each other in strategies which meet their actual conditions of use.

- * Recognizes that the realities of poverty, class, racism, social isolation, past trauma, sex-based discrimination and other social inequalities affect both people's vulnerability to and capacity for effectively dealing with drug-related harm.

- * Does not attempt to minimize or ignore the real and tragic harm and danger associated with licit and illicit drug use.

-From the Harm Reduction Coalition website:

<http://www.harmreduction.org/>